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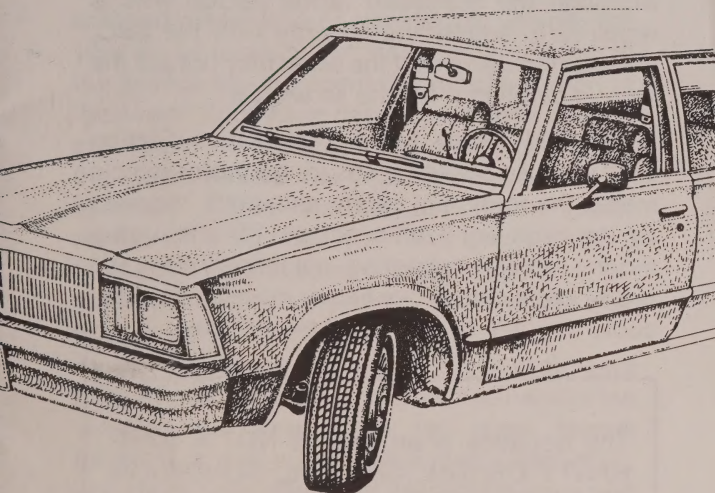
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Safety Certification and Registration of Used Motor Vehicles

**A Guide
for Purchasers
and Sellers**



Ministry
of
Transportation

The aim of this booklet is to clarify the Vehicle Registration System and act as a guide to procedures a seller and purchaser must follow when buying or selling a used motor vehicle.

It also informs the owners of passenger cars, vans and light trucks of the items which will be inspected on his or her vehicle and standards which must be met before a Safety Standards Certificate (SSC) can be issued.

Under the vehicle registration system, the purchaser of any used motor vehicle must apply to the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) within six days of purchase to transfer the permit for the vehicle into his/her name, in either a "fit" or "unfit" condition. If he/she wishes to operate the vehicle on a highway, the purchaser will have to get a "fit" permit for the vehicle and to do this he/she will have to provide MTO with proof of the vehicle's safety by means of a valid SSC.

Although the purchaser is the person who is required to supply the Ministry with the SSC, there is no reason why the seller may not sell the vehicle certified if he/she so wishes.

A licensed Motor Vehicle Inspection Station shall issue an SSC after ensuring a motor vehicle meets the minimum safety standards required by the Highway Traffic Act (HTA), although a motor vehicle inspecting mechanic may still refuse certification due to any modification that could degrade the safety of the vehicle.

The issuance of an SSC IS NOT A WARRANTY ON THE GENERAL CONDITION OF THE VEHICLE, but merely states that on the *date of issuance* of the certificate, it met the minimum safety standards as set down by regulations in Ontario's HTA.

This information is a *guide* only. For official purposes, refer to the HTA and regulations.

PURCHASER

When Purchased Certified

You will receive from the seller the signed and dated vehicle portion of the permit, the bill of sale and the designated copies of a valid SSC, showing not more than 36 elapsed days from the date of inspection, with no errors, omissions or alterations. You shall then produce these documents together with proof of insurance and the plate portion of the permit for the licence plates previously issued to you, to any licence issuing agent within 6 days of purchase. You will be issued a new permit for the vehicle and, if you have not owned a motor vehicle previously, a set of licence number plates will be issued to you at this time.

Payment of an administration or validation fee will be required by the licence issuing agent. Sales tax, if applicable, will be collected at this time.

When Purchased Uncertified

You shall within six days of purchase, either obtain an SSC for the vehicle and transfer it as outlined previously, or transfer the vehicle into your name in an "unfit" status by producing to the licence issuing agent the vehicle portion of the permit signed and dated by the seller and the bill of sale. The licence issuing agent will transfer the motor vehicle into your name in an "unfit" condition. Before you can operate the motor vehicle on a highway, you must obtain an SSC for the vehicle and transfer the vehicle into a "fit" status by the steps previously outlined and affix your validated licence plates.

If you operate the motor vehicle within six days of purchase but have been unable to transfer the vehicle into your name for some reason (possibly it was purchased during a weekend), you must have affixed to the vehicle your own validated licence plates. You must carry with you while operating the vehicle, and produce on demand, a valid SSC for the vehicle, the vehicle portion of the permit that was issued for the vehicle and the plate portion of the permit for the licence plates being displayed.

SELLER

When Selling Certified

At the time of sale remove and keep your licence plates, give the purchaser the vehicle portion of the permit (signed and dated by yourself), a bill of sale and an SSC showing not more than 36 elapsed days from the date of inspection, with no errors, omissions or alterations. The Motor Vehicle Inspection Station will supply you with an original, white SSC, designated "MTO copy" (to be surrendered to a licence issuer to transfer) and a yellow carbon copy designated "purchaser's copy" (for the vehicle purchaser's personal records).

When Selling Uncertified

The vehicle portion of the permit, properly signed and dated by yourself, is detached and given to the purchaser. You remove the licence plates from the vehicle and keep them to put on the next motor vehicle you purchase. This also applies if you sell the vehicle to a licensed car dealer or an auto wrecker.

NOTICE: It is an offence for any person to add to or make any alterations whatsoever on an SSC. Any such certificate shall be deemed void and will not be accepted by the licence issuing agent.

The following information is a guide for any person, who by reason of purchase or sale of a used motor vehicle, is required to have their passenger vehicle, light commercial vehicle or van inspected to obtain an SSC.

The following items shall be inspected, and the motor vehicle shall be denied an SSC if:

Body and Interior

- a) any bumper, fender or mudguard has been removed or is mounted insecurely;
- b) any body part has protruding sharp edges that could be hazardous to pedestrians or passengers;
- c) any hood latch or passenger door does not operate as intended;
- d) the driver's sunvisor does not operate properly;
- e) any occupant seat is insecure or fails to maintain its adjustment;
- f) the inside and/or outside rearview mirrors are loose, cracked or have any significant reductions of the reflective surface, or the inside mirror (where required) is missing;
- g) where required, the seat belt assemblies are missing, insecure, damaged, inoperative or do not function as intended;

- h) the frame or any structural unitized member is broken or cracked; has any loose or missing connecting fasteners; or is perforated with rust that could downgrade the safety of the vehicle; or
- i) The underbody, including the trunk floor pan, is perforated by rust or damaged or has any opening that may allow entry of exhaust gas.

Glazing

- a) any glass, where required, is other than safety glass;
- b) any glazing material has exposed sharp edges, a missing part or is insecure;
- c) any safety glass in the windshield, or to the left or right of the driver, has been replaced with any vision-obstructing material, or is clouded or fogged so as to affect the driver's vision;
- d) the windshield has any star, crack or stone chip in the area swept by the driver's wiper blade that *could* affect the driver's vision; or
- e) the driver's window does not open freely.

Lighting and Electrical

- a) any prescribed lamp fails to operate or interferes with any other circuit;
- b) any turn signal indicator lamp fails to operate properly;
- c) any lamp or reflector is loose or missing in whole or in part, or is discoloured;
- d) any headlamp is covered with a coloured lacquer or is fitted with any device affecting brightness (e.g. headlamp shields);
- e) any headlamp shutter or retracting headlamp fails to operate properly or is not secured in the fully-open position;
- f) any headlamp is aligned incorrectly;

- g) the headlamp dimmer switch or high-beam indicating light fails to operate as intended;
- h) the horn fails to operate or is insecure on its mount;
- i) the windshield wiper/washer assemblies and the heating and defrosting systems do not function as originally intended;
- j) where originally fitted, the neutral safety switch has been removed or allows the starter motor to operate in any other than the neutral and park positions; or
- k) the speedometer is not in good working order.

“Prescribed Lights” is the phrase used to cover the lighting requirements of vehicles for the purposes of the HTA, and applies to all vehicles, including passenger cars, light and heavy trucks and trailers. “Prescribed Lights” vary with vehicle dimensions and include the lights listed below:

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| Headlamps: | no more than four, and shall be white or amber in colour; |
| Turn signals: | shall be self illuminating; |
| Stop lights: | shall be red or yellow in colour; |
| Tail Lights: | shall be red in colour; |
| Licence plate: | rear plate must be illuminated by a white light; |
| Reflectors: | shall be red in colour, located at the rear and as close as practical to the outside of the vehicle body (most tail light lenses incorporate a reflective lens in their construction); and |
| Side markers: | one on each side near the front, green or amber in colour, and one on each side near the rear, red in colour. |

NOTE:

Although side marker lights are not required for certification of a motor vehicle with a length of 6.1 metres (20 feet) or less, the Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (CMVSS) requires all vehicles manufactured on or after January 1, 1971, to be equipped with side marker lights.

Engine and Controls

- a) with the engine running, there is any visible leakage in the fuel system (the fuel tank does not have to be filled before inspection for leaks);
- b) any attachment or component of the fuel system is insecure or missing, including a proper fuel filler cap;
- c) the accelerator linkage fails to return the engine speed to idle when the pedal is released; or,
- d) the power steering belt is defective, incorrectly adjusted or missing.

Exhaust System and Manifolds

- a) any exhaust component is missing or mounted insecurely;
- b) any exhaust leakage is present, other than from the manufacturer's drain holes;
- c) any exhaust component is within the occupant compartment, or is so located or unguarded that any occupant may be burned by entering or leaving the vehicle; or
- d) the exhaust system has been shortened or modified from original, so as to fail to direct the exhaust beyond the underbody of the occupant compartment or luggage compartment.

NOTE: Although emission control devices are not required to be inspected for the purpose of issuing an SSC, the motor vehicle will be in violation of the Environmental Protection Act if any component of the emission control system is inoperative, defective, has been removed, or fails to function as intended.

Trailer Hitch

- a) any trailer hitch or attachment is damaged, excessively worn or insecure as to affect its proper operation; or,
- b) any trailer hitch lock assembly fails to operate as intended.

Steering and Suspension

- a) any visible leakage of fluid is present in the power steering system or the reservoir fluid level is too low;
- b) the steering column, box or couplings are excessively worn or loose on their mountings, or parts are missing or loose;
- c) any steering linkage joint is worn or loose;
- d) any steering system, or suspension locking device or clamp is missing, loose or worn so as to affect its proper operation;
- e) the front wheels are visibly out of alignment;
- f) the front wheels fail to turn from full right to full left freely;
- g) free movement of the steering wheel exceeds manufacturer's limits;
- h) the power steering system does not operate as intended;
- i) any component, or attachment of the suspension system, or its supports, is excessively worn, corroded, broken, bent, cracked, loose, disconnected or missing;

- j) the front or rear axles are tracking improperly so as to affect handling the vehicle;
- k) any ball joint is worn beyond manufacturer's limits; or
- l) any wheel or axle bearing is excessively worn, loose or damaged.

Wheels and Tires

NOTE: Only those wheels/tires installed on axles are inspected.

- a) any wheel-retaining device is worn, defective, loose or missing;
- b) any wheel is cracked, excessively bent or has been repaired by welding;
- c) any wheel spoke is loose, broken or missing;
- d) tire shows any exposed cord;
- e) any abnormal bump, bulge or knot is present;
- f) any tire makes contact with any vehicle component;
- g) any tire bears the markings "not for highway use" or "farm use only";
- h) any tire is worn beyond the minimum allowed tread depth; e.g. built-in wear bar indicators are showing on two adjacent major tread grooves at three equal spacings around the circumference of the tire;
- i) any tire is of a smaller size than vehicle manufacturer's specified minimum size;
- j) any mixture of 50 to 60 series are installed on the front axle and any other series on the rear;
- k) any tire differs in construction type from any other tire on the same axle; or,
- l) except on a vehicle fitted with dual rear tires, any mixture of radial tires are on the front axle and belted-bias or bias ply tires are installed on the rear axle.

Brakes

- a) any fluid or vacuum leakage is present in the braking system;
- b) the brake fluid in the brake master cylinder is below the manufacturer's recommended minimum level;
- c) any brake tubing has heavy corrosion scaling;
- d) any vacuum or hydraulic hose or tube is damaged, insecure, missing or chafes against any part of the vehicle;
- e) with the foot brake applied, the brake pedal moves toward the floor;
- f) the brakes, including the parking brake, are not adjusted properly;
- g) any brake, including the parking brake, fails to release immediately when the pedal or lever is released;
- h) any mechanical, vacuum or hydraulic component is missing, cracked, loose, badly worn, seized or damaged so as to affect its operation;
- i) any hydraulic component is leaking fluid;
- j) with the motor running and the brake pedal applied, the brake failure warning light comes on;
- k) with the vacuum depleted from the power brake (by depressing the brake pedal three or four times), the motor shut off and the brake pedal depressed, the pedal fails to move momentarily towards the floor when the motor is started;
- l) any brake drum or rotor is worn beyond the manufacturer's limits, or the friction surfaces are damaged mechanically other than from normal wear;
- m) any brake rotor cooling fin is cracked or broken;
- n) any bonded brake lining is thinner than 1.5 millimetres (1/16 inch) at its thinnest point;

- o) any riveted brake lining is thinner than 0.8 millimetres (1/32 inch) at its thinnest point;
- p) any brake lining is broken or loose on its shoe or pad;
- q) any brake lining is contaminated;
- r) any wheel hub seal, axle seal or oil retainer is missing or leaking;
- s) the parking brake does not hold properly and release fully;
- t) where originally fitted, the dual-circuit brake warning lamp fails to operate as intended; or,
- u) on the road test, the braking system does not brake evenly or stop the vehicle within the required distance.

Some of the standards contained in this booklet rely on the mechanical experience and sound judgement of the inspection mechanic, based on the inspection standards as set down in the HTA.

When certification of a motor vehicle is required, the following should be noted:

- The Ministry does not make recommendations regarding the choice of Motor Vehicle Inspection Stations (MVIS) to perform inspections. The choice is yours.
- The Ministry does not govern the cost of either inspection or repairs required to bring the vehicle to the standards set down in the regulations. It might, therefore, be beneficial to “shop around” and compare prices.
- You are not compelled to have your vehicle repaired at the MVIS where the initial inspection was completed. However, you must return the vehicle to the station for reinspection of the repaired items and issuance of the SSC. In this case, no additional fee will be charged for reinspection providing the wheel brake assemblies do not have to be inspected a second time.

NOTE: THE VEHICLE MUST BE RETURNED TO THE MVIS WITHIN 10 CALENDAR DAYS WITH THE SPECIFIED DEFECTS REPAIRED TO QUALIFY FOR REINSPECTION AT NO CHARGE.

The Highway Traffic Act provides for the revocation of the Inspection Station licence where it can be proven that the station has oversold the amount of repairs required (i.e. forcing repairs or replacement of parts that are worn but still meet the inspection requirements), or where the station has conducted an improper inspection.

The Highway Traffic Act also provides penalties of \$50. to \$500. for those convicted of performing sub standard inspections.

The material in this booklet may be reprinted, or used in any manner to further motor vehicle safety.

NOTES

NOTES

**Further information regarding
Vehicle Inspection can be obtained
from your nearest Drivers and
Vehicles District Office of
the Ministry of Transportation**



**Ministry
of
Transportation**